

PREVIOUSLY ON “MEDIA EDGE” (January-March, 2018)

Episode 672 (March 24-30)

"Who Should Get Into the USA?"

Robert Reich looks at the facts behind the immigration debate.

"The Laura Flanders Show"

Laura talks politics, culture, and economics with Tarso Luís Ramos, executive director of Political Research Associates, and Sarah Ludwig, co-founder of the New Economy Project. Plus, Laura's weekly commentary with a few cheers for the cities who divest (in this new "fossil fuel moment").

"How to Resolve Racially Stressful Situations"

If we hope to heal the racial tensions that threaten to tear the fabric of society apart, we're going to need the skills to openly express ourselves in racially stressful situations. Through racial literacy — the ability to read, recast and resolve these situations — psychologist Howard C. Stevenson helps children and parents reduce and manage stress and trauma. In this inspiring, quietly awesome talk, learn more about how this approach to decoding racial threat can help youth build confidence and stand up for themselves in productive ways.

"Preventing Gun Violence – An International Perspective"

On October 25, 2015, the Joint Annual Dinner of the Sacramento Chapters of Physicians for Social Responsibility and the United Nations Association featured keynote speaker Rebecca Peters, the founding director of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). Following the 1996 Port Arthur massacre in Australia, Ms. Peters led a grass roots gun control campaign that led to prompt action by the Australian government to ban all assault weapons in their country. For her work on gun violence prevention, she received the Australian Human Rights Medal, the Australian equivalent of the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom.

During her keynote address, Ms. Peters described how she and her Australian colleagues were able to get the nationwide ban on assault weapons passed. She noted that following the ban, over a million firearms were removed from circulation, overall rates of firearm related deaths and injuries, already much lower than in the United States, declined even further, and there hasn't been a single additional mass shooting.

Ms. Peters challenged Americans to take similar action to stop the epidemic of gun violence in our country.

Episode 671 (March 17-23)

"New Jersey's Money Bail Overhaul: A Success Story"

A success story – New Jersey's historic money bail reform! New Jersey's new pretrial justice system provides hope and best practices for states working to end mass incarceration.

On January 1, 2017, New Jersey essentially ended its money bail system. The state's pretrial incarceration rate has since dropped nearly 20%.

"New Jersey's Money Bail Overhaul: A Success Story" tells the story of Tyler, who was arrested and given probation following an altercation with a relative. The court decided against prison time, and thanks to New Jersey's system Tyler didn't have to sit in jail for months to learn his fate.

"The Laura Flanders Show"

Power politics and the politics of power - this time on the show, we talk with New York City's Chief Resilience Officer, Daniel Zarrilli, on the decision to divest from fossil fuels and Clara Vondrich of Divest/Invest, one of the activist groups that helped make it happen. Also, author, journalist, Christian Parenti believes that we don't demand enough of government but extreme weather will force our behavior to change.

"Can Trump Fire Mueller?"

Robert Reich looks at how Trump might try to get rid of Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

"How Protest Is Redefining Democracy around the World"

The democratic process is messy, complicated and often inefficient — but across Africa, activists are redefining democracy by putting protest at its center. In an illuminating talk, political scientist Zachariah Mampilly gives us a primer on the current wave of protests reshaping countries like Tunisia, Malawi and Zimbabwe — and explains how this form of political dissension expands our political imaginations beyond what we're told is possible.

"A Tale of Two Cities"

A Tale of Two Cities tells the story of citizens from two very different Michigan communities—picturesque, small town Ewart and gritty, industrial Flint— that have found their futures inextricably linked by a threat to the one thing that all life requires: water. In our third short documentary, we explore the growing threat of water privatization and what happens when government runs a critical function, like providing clean drinking water, as if it were a business.

"From Danger to Dignity"

After more than a century of back-alley tragedies, a national movement to decriminalize abortion took root. FROM DANGER to DIGNITY combines rare archival footage with present-day interviews to weave together two parallel stories: the evolution of underground networks to help women find safe abortions outside the law and the intensive efforts of activists and legislators who broke the silence and changed the laws.

Episode 670 (March 10-16)

"How to Ignite Social Change"

Robert Reich invites you to join his class on wealth and inequality in America. The topic for the first lecture is the three elements of social change.

"Understand Your Split Brain"

In his second class in this series, Robert Reich examines the competing values that inform Americans' views of the economy.

"What Should Be the Purpose of Corporations?"

Robert Reich examines the role of corporations in America, and how the decisions of corporate executives impact the rest of the economy.

"Another Year. Another Fight"

Last year, you stood up. You took action. You fought for the country you want to live in. These fights aren't over, and we're ready to do it all again with you this year.

"Black Life at the Intersection of Birth and Death"

"It is the artist's job to unearth stories that people try to bury with shovels of complacency and time," says poet and freedom fighter Mwendu "FreeQuency" Katwiwa. Performing her poem "The Joys of Motherhood," Katwiwa explores the experience of Black mothers in America and discusses the impact of the Movement for Black Lives — because, she says, it's impossible to separate the two.

"Reclaiming Their Voice: The Native American Vote in New Mexico"

This 2009 documentary -- directed by EMMY-winning filmmaker, Dorothy Fadiman -- documents ways in which Native Americans have been disenfranchised over centuries, in particular in voting representation. It chronicles the Laguna Pueblo tribe of New Mexico in their 2004 groundbreaking voter registration drive and the challenges they faced once Laguna voters arrived at the polls. The film also shows the Sacred Alliance for Grassroots Equality's (SAGE) fight to preserve parts of the sacred Petroglyph National Monument.

The film is narrated by Peter Coyote and features interviews with members of the local Laguna community, including New Mexico House Representative, W. Ken Martinez. Robin H. Levin, the Community Librarian of the Fort Washakie School in Wyoming, said of the film: "Emotions run deep when viewing this insightful political documentary. The story blends sincere efforts to achieve political clout with unfortunate results that, somehow, do not shut down the hopes of Native voters in New Mexico."

In 2010, the film won the "Best New Mexico Film Award" at the first Duke City Doc Festival, which later became the Albuquerque International Film Festival.

"The Story of Cosmetics"

An examination of the pervasive use of toxic chemicals in our everyday personal care products, from lipstick to baby shampoo. This film by The Story of Stuff Project reveals the implications for consumer and worker health and the environment, and outlines ways we can move the industry away from hazardous chemicals and towards safer alternatives.

Episode 669 (March 3-9)

"Mental Health Experts on Donald Trump"

Leading mental health experts speak out on the world's most dangerous man.

Donald Trump has incited his followers to violence, brags about his sexual assaults, and is unable to respond calmly to any criticism.

We need a nonpartisan expert panel to assess Trump's mental fitness.

"The Laura Flanders Show"

Climate change can go one of two ways, bring us together or drive us apart, and cities will lead the way. Architect, author and planner Carl Anthony joins Laura in conversation with Ashley Dawson, author of "Extreme Cities," to discuss the best and worst ways to respond to climate change.

"The Thrilling Potential for Off-Grid Solar Energy"

An energy revolution is happening in villages and towns across Africa.

Off-grid solar energy is becoming a viable alternative to traditional electricity systems.

Every household can be a proud producer as well as consumer of energy.

That's the democracy of energy.

"Over Troubled Waters"

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the largest estuary on the west coast of the Americas, is a national treasure being squandered by greed. In this visually rich documentary, Ed Begley, Jr. narrates the story of the battle being fought by the people of the Delta to protect the region they love and encourage saner water policies for all of the people of California.

"Cure to Loneliness"

We are not involved in each other's stories anymore. We don't depend on each other in the way that people did for most of human history, when your well-being depended on the health and talents of people around you.

That is where our civilization has taken us ... and we're pretty lonely here.

Episode 668 (February 24 – March 2)

"Saving the Heart and Soul of Our Democracy: Why America needs a Poor People's Campaign and a National Moral Revival"

This entire episode of Media Edge will include our recording of a spellbinding presentation by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber in Sacramento on November 3 at the St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

Rev. Dr. Barber inspired a packed Moon Lecture Series audience to their feet with his enthusiasm. He was the architect of the "Forward Together Movement," which gained national acclaim with its Moral Monday protests.

He is the President of "Repairers of the Breach," sits on the National NAACP Board of Directors, and is the 2015 recipient of the Puffin Award and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Award.

Rev. Dr. Barber described himself as a theologically evangelical, liberal, conservative, charismatic, liberationist, revolutionary, militant Christian.

Episode 667 (February 17-23)

Segment 1 -- "Trump's 20 Worst Broken Promises"

Robert Reich explains Trump broken promises to his voters.

Segment 2 -- "The Muslim Ban -- One Year Later"

It's been a year since Trump enacted his misguided and discriminatory Muslim Ban. It was wrong then and it's wrong now

Segment 3 -- "The Laura Flanders Show"

What difference does it make when some people are left out of the picture, like when police don't keep data on queer women? Activist attorney Andrea Ritchie returns with her book, Invisible No More. And 2 generations of picture makers talk about mothers, sons and radical art.

Segment 4 -- "Virginia's Newly Elected Delegates Bring Women's Issues to the Forefront"

After Trump's election in 2016 women around the country came together to push back against regressive policies from the Trump Administration. Virginia's newly elected women delegates are now leading the charge in making their voices heard in government.

Segment 5 -- "How to Put the Power of Law in People's Hands"

What can you do when the wheels of justice don't turn fast enough? Or when they don't turn at all? Vivek Maru is working to transform the relationship between people and law, turning law from an abstraction or threat into something that everyone can understand, use and shape. Instead of relying solely on lawyers, Maru started a global network of community paralegals, or barefoot lawyers, who serve in their own communities and break the law down into simple terms to help people find solutions. Learn more about how this innovative approach to using the law is helping socially excluded people claim their rights. "A little bit of legal empowerment can go a long way," Maru says.

Segment 6 -- "How We Can Lower Drug Prices (When Big Pharma Pulls the Strings)"

Robert Reich explains why prescription drug prices are so high in the United States, and how we can make them more affordable.

Segment 7 -- "This is Crazy: Criminalizing Mental Health"

America is "treating" mental illness through incarceration - and the price we are paying both in dollars and human capital is enormous. This film focuses on the problems with criminalizing mental health, told through first-hand accounts.

Segment 8 -- "The Next Big Fight Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid"

Robert Reich explains why we need to protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

Segment 9 -- "We Are Not Strangers To This Land: Untold Stories of DREAMERS"

The documentary "We Are Not Strangers To This Land: Untold Stories of DREAMERS" was filmed and produced by immigrant rights activists who are part of Alianza, a coalition at Sacramento City College. This impactful documentary shares the stories of local Dreamers in order to humanize the ongoing struggle of navigating their lives in the United States while undocumented.

Segment 10 -- "Democracy -- by Langston Hughes"

As we celebrate the success of the Women's March in 2017 and 2018, we celebrate progressive women of color who show up to the hard fights time and time again to make progress happen.

Episode 666 (February 10-16)

Segment 1 -- "You Can't Have Infinite Growth on a Finite Planet"

The earth is full. It's full of us. Full of our stuff. Full of our waste. Full of our demands. Our economy is now bigger than its host, our planet.

What this means is our economy is unsustainable. When things aren't sustainable, they stop. Economic growth will stop because of the end of cheap resources. It will stop because of the growing demand of us on all the systems of the earth. It is based a crazy idea. The crazy idea being that we're going to have infinite growth on a finite planet. The earth doesn't care what we need. Mother Nature doesn't negotiate. She just sets rules and describes consequences. We tend to look at the world not as an integrated system that it is, but as a series of individual issues. We see the occupy protest. We see spiraling debt crises. We see growing inequality. We see money's influence on politics.

But we mistakenly see each of these issues as individual problems to be solved. In fact, it's the system in the painful process of breaking down. We can choose this moment of crisis to ask and answer the big questions of society's evolution. Like, what do we want to be when we grow up? When we move past this bumbling adolescence, will we think there are no limits and suffer delusions of immorality? Well, it's time to grow up. To do wiser. To be calmer. To be more considered. Like generations before us, we'll be growing up in war. Not a war between civilizations, but a war for civilization. This could be our finest hour.

Segment 2 -- "Three Thoughtful Ways to Conserve Water"

According to the UN, nearly one in three people worldwide live in a country facing a water crisis, and less than five percent of the world lives in a country that has more water today than it did 20 years ago. Lana Mazahreh grew up in Jordan, a state that has experienced absolute water scarcity since 1973, where she learned how to conserve water as soon as she was old enough to learn how to write her name. In this practical talk, she shares three lessons from water-poor countries on how to save water and address what's fast becoming a global crisis.

Segment 3 -- "How Martin Luther King's Dream Became A Nightmare"

When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave the "I Have a Dream" 50 years ago, he had no idea Jim Crow would be replaced with another oppressive system: mass incarceration and the drug war. Nixon started the drug war just 8 years after King's "I have a Dream" speech. Both Reagan and Clinton continued it.

In 2013 a study found that more black men were incarcerated than were enslaved in the 1850. It's our turn to dream how to end mass incarceration. If you have a felony on your record, it's harder to get a job and you also cannot get many forms of public assistance.

In Dothan, Alabama, T.O.P.S. is offering support for people just getting out of jail-everything from clothes to GED. This is one way to end mass incarceration. It is important to see the links between civil rights, voting rights, and the drug war.

Segment 4 -- "Immigrants For Sale"

Immigrants For Sale is a ground-breaking documentary that goes inside the private immigrant detention industry, through the lens of those most impacted, the players behind the trade and the multi-billion dollar profits that fuel it all.

Segment 5 -- "Catching Fire"

Catching Fire tells a compelling story of how a small but committed group of local, tribal, state and federal land managers are bringing back the use of prescribed fire as a tool to protect communities and ecosystems across Northern California. It examines the use of fire by the Karuk Tribe of California, and the connection between the rise of megafires across the West and the last century of fire suppression. Drawing on interviews with fire scientists, tribal and federal land managers, and fire savvy residents from across the North State, this film provides insight on how our relationship to fire can be restored through strategic use of fire as a powerful management tool.

Episode 665 (February 3-9)

Segment 1 -- "The Laura Flanders Show"

2018 brought us #TimesUp, but the history of collaboration between grassroots activists and Hollywood celebrities was already very long. Laura talks to Eve Ensler, who will be returning to Broadway with a new play titled "In The Body of the World," about why our bodies must be connected to our politics.

Then, an interview with Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin, of the hit show 'Grace and Frankie,' alongside Saru Jarayanan, president of Restaurant Opportunities Center United. Laura speaks to them in Detroit during the summer of 2017 after they went to canvas door to door for a ballot initiative that seeks not only to win a single fair minimum wage, but to help build a broad progressive agenda in Michigan statewide.

Segment 2 -- "Kidnapped by the Palm Oil Industry"

Villagers in Suka Jaya in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia have had their land stolen out from under them by a company that sells palm oil to the global marketplace, and is financed by global banks and investors. These are their testimonies.

Segment 3 -- "The Power of Citizen Video to Create Undeniable Truths"

Could smartphones and cameras be our most powerful weapons for social justice? Through her organization Witness, Yvette Alberdingk Thijm is developing strategies and technologies to help activists use video to protect and defend human rights. She shares stories of the growing power of distant witnesses — and a call to use the powerful tools at our disposal to capture incidents of injustice.

Segment 4 -- "How to Talk About the Muslim Ban"

How we speak out against the Muslim Ban should be just as important as standing up against it in the first place. Here's why.

Segment 5 -- "Redefining Investment"

Investment has been all about maximizing financial return at any cost, even if that cost is environmental pollution, human dignity, or our moral compass. Tim Jackson counters that the role of investment must be reconceived to instead create conditions for people to flourish.

Segment 6 -- "Koch Brothers Exposed"

This documentary shines a light on billionaires David and Charles Koch, who were handed the ability to buy our democracy in the form of giant checks to the House, Senate, and soon, possibly even the Presidency. It investigates where their money went and who their money hurt during the process leading up to the 2014 elections.

Episode 664 (January 27 - February 2)

Segment 1 -- "The Big Picture: How We Got Into This Mess, And How We to Get Out of It"

Robert Reich looks at the rise of Big Money in politics, the decline of our democracy, and Trump's election.

Segment 2 -- "Sentencing Reform - The Power of Fear"

It's time to end mass incarceration. Locking up more and more people for longer and longer doesn't make us safer.

The U.S. imprisons more people than any other nation. Over 2.3 million adults are currently in U.S. prisons and jails. The incarceration rate in the U.S. has shot up 500% over the past four decades. Yet studies show that locking up more and more people for longer and longer won't make us safer.

Fear-mongering politicians and sensational, stereotyping media coverage has driven bad policies that lock up greater numbers of people. Poor people of color are overwhelmingly and disproportionately targeted.

"Sentencing Reform: - The Power of Fear" is the first film in a new series on sentencing reform. The forthcoming series will highlight the symptoms of mass incarceration and present real, fact-based alternatives.

This episode explores the scope and source of mass incarceration.

Segment 3 -- "The Internet's Own Boy: The Story of Aaron Swartz"

This feature film follows the story of programming prodigy and information activist Aaron Swartz. From Swartz's help in the development of the basic internet protocol RSS to his co-founding of Reddit, his fingerprints are all over the internet. But it was Swartz's groundbreaking work in social justice and political organizing combined with his aggressive approach to information access that ensnared him in a two-year legal nightmare. It was a battle that ended with the taking of his own life at the age of 26.

Aaron's story touched a nerve with people far beyond the online communities in which he was a celebrity. This film is a personal story about what we lose when we are tone deaf about technology and its relationship to our civil liberties. not just a cybersecurity problem — it's a civil rights problem.

Episode 663 (January 20-26)

Segment 1 -- "The Laura Flanders Show"

Can sanctuary exist in a state that still insists on broken windows policing? Ravi Ragbir and Sara Gozalo of The New Sanctuary Coalition of New York City describe pushing back state pressure and creating real sanctuary, communally, through partnering -- not policing.

Segment 2 -- "Our Treatment of HIV Has Advanced. Why Hasn't the Stigma Changed?"

The treatment of HIV has significantly advanced over the past three decades — why hasn't our perception of people with the disease advanced along with it? After being diagnosed with HIV, Arik Hartmann chose to live transparently, being open about his status, in an effort to educate people.

In this candid, personal talk, he shares what it's like to live with HIV — and calls on us to dismiss our misconceptions about the disease.

Segment 3 -- "Gun Violence In America: A Preventable Epidemic"

On October 22, 2017, Joshua Sugarman, founder and executive director of the Violence Policy center in Washington, D.C., was the keynote speaker at the Joint Annual Dinner of the Sacramento Chapters of Physicians for Social Responsibility and Americans Against Gun Violence. Sugarman asserted that the epidemic of Gun Violence in America can and must be solved.

Segment 4 -- "Bring Andres Home"

The lawyer for a Kona coffee farmer who was deported back to Mexico despite being called a “pillar of his community” by a U.S. judge plans to file an appeal with the Board of Immigration Appeals on the grounds that he was legitimately married to a U.S. citizen and should not have been deported.

Episode 662 (January 13-19)

Segment 1 -- "Why Tax Breaks For the Rich Don't Create Jobs"

It's time to end the "trickle-down" myth.

Segment 2 -- "Courage Is Contagious"

When artist Damon Davis went to join the protests in Ferguson, Missouri, after police killed Michael Brown in 2014, he found not only anger but also a sense of love for self and community. His documentary "Whose Streets?" tells the story of the protests from the perspective of the activists who showed up to challenge those who use power to spread fear and hate.

Segment 3 -- "Warrantless Surveillance Ensnares Physics Professor"

Do we want to live in a world where academics fear surveillance and prosecution simply because they communicate with colleagues abroad? The chilling effect on academic collaboration and freedom of expression, both protected by the First Amendment, are clear.

Segment 4 -- "When Heritage Equals Hate -- The Truth About the Confederacy in the United States"

Jeffery Robinson, the ACLU's top racial justice expert, discusses the dark history of Confederate symbols across the country and outlines what we can do to learn from our past and combat systemic racism.

Episode 661 (January 6-12)

Segment 1 -- "One Word Defined 2017: Resist"

In the wake of Donald Trump becoming the U.S. president, people around the world poured into the streets to resist.

Segment 2 -- "40 Strangers, 50 Questions"

As our country becomes increasingly divided, we must acknowledge our many differences, yet understand and embrace that we are all one. We must help one another, and pledge to step out of the boxes of fear and hate, and step into one of empathy, solidarity, and unity.

Segment 3 -- "Bringing Jaguars back to the U.S. Southwest"

Thousands of jaguars used to roam the U.S. Southwest, but over the past two centuries, jaguars have been eliminated from more than half of their range. Defenders of Wildlife wants to do everything we can to bring these elusive, endangered big cats home.

Segment 4 -- "The Story of Cap & Trade"

Meet the energy traders and financiers at the heart of the "Cap & Trade" scheme, which gives free permits to big polluters, provides fake offsets, and distracts from what's really required to tackle the climate crisis.

Segment 5 -- "Google and the World Brain"

The story of the most ambitious project ever conceived on the Internet. In 2002 Google began to scan millions of books in an effort to create a giant global library, containing every book in existence. They had an even greater purpose - to create a higher form of intelligence, something that HG Wells had predicted in his 1937 essay "World Brain". But over half the books Google scanned were in copyright, and authors across the world launched a campaign to stop Google, which climaxed in a New York courtroom in 2011.

This film explores the dreams, dilemmas and dangers of the Internet.

Episode 660 (December 30, 2017 to January 5, 2018)

Segment 1 -- "16 Women and Donald Trump"

16 women have come forward to report being sexually harassed or assaulted by Donald Trump. Seeing their stories together is incredibly powerful, and damning. It's time to hold him to account.

Segment 2 -- "The Laura Flanders Show"

This show comes from Whitakers, North Carolina and the annual gathering of the Southern Movement Assemblies -- a living experiment in popular democracy and local self-governance. Plantation politics, monopoly capitalism, incarceration instead of peace: a lot of the worst of the American experience has its roots in the US South, but so does much of the best, from slave revolts, to abolition, to organized labor and civil rights. If the country goes as the South goes, what grassroots progressives do here matters.

Segment 3 -- "Say No To Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge"

Members of the native Gwich'in tribe say the refuge is sacred land and should not be drilled for oil. Footage provided by Patagonia.

Segment 4 -- "How to Transform Apocalypse Fatigue into Action on Global Warming"

The biggest obstacle to dealing with climate disruptions lies between your ears, says psychologist and economist Per Espen Stokes. He's spent years studying the defenses we use to avoid thinking about the demise of our planet — and figuring out a new way of talking about global warming that keeps us from shutting down. Step away from the doomsday narratives and learn how to make caring for the earth feel personable, doable and empowering with this fun, informative talk.

Segment 5 -- "War on Whistleblowers: Free Press and the National Security State"

This film highlights four cases where whistleblowers noticed government wrong-doing and took to the media to expose the fraud and abuse. It exposes the surprisingly worsening and threatening reality for whistleblowers and the press. The film includes interviews with whistleblowers Michael DeKort, Thomas Drake, Franz Gatl and Thomas Tamm and award-winning journalists like David Carr, Lucy Dalglish, Glenn Greenwald, Seymour Hersh, Michael Isikoff, Bill Keller, Eric Lipton, Jane Mayer, Dana Priest, Tom Vanden Brook and Sharon Weinberger.